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Dissenters In Texas Hit By Violence

By Jim Barlow

HOUSTON, Tex. (AP)—During a time when "establishment" buildings across the nation have been bombed and set afire, there have also been numerous acts of violence in Houston—but almost exclusively directed against institutions and persons identified with dissent.

For instance: On Oct. 6 a bomb ripped through the transmitter of the Pacific radio station—the second explosion within six months.

Pacifica, a nonprofit, listener-supported station which also operates in Berkeley, Calif., Los Angeles and New York, offers free radio time to all groups, regardless of views.

In Houston, rightwing groups have refused to appear on Pacifica, while spokesmen for organizations on the left have.

The first bombing was on May 12, when the station transmitter at a rural site was destroyed. October's bombing did not do as much physical damage but it did force the station to move its transmitter at the insistence of its landlord.

Klan Denies Blame

Station Manager Larry Lee says he hopes to be back on the air by mid-December. He blames the Ku Klux Klan for the bombings—a charge denied by a Klan leader.

Other examples of violence:

The rural-area home of Fred Brode, a railroad employee who is chairman of the Houston Committee to end the war in Vietnam, has been fired into so often he has stacked sandbags in front for protection.

Arson has been attempted on the home of Dr. Edgar Crane, a University of Houston professor and a member of the American Civil Liberties Union.

The offices of a local underground newspaper, the Space City News, has been shot into,

burglarized and bombed. Cars parked on the street outside have been riddled with bullets. Other cars were set afire. After many of the incidents, staffers received telephone calls from persons who claimed responsibility and identified themselves as members of the KKK.

The Family Hand Restaurant, a hippie-run cafe where many Houston radicals meet, has been bombed twice in the past four months.

Persons who attended antiwar rallies in a near-downtown park and at Rice University return to find the tires of their cars slashed.

No Deaths, No Arrests

So far, no one has been killed or seriously injured in the violence. And so far, no one has been arrested.

"We know of hundreds of incidents of tire-slashing, instances of gunfire, cross-burning and arson, but we have not been able to gather evidence against anyone that would stand up in court," Lt. M. L. Singleton, head of the Houston police intelligence squad, said.

Singleton claimed one member of his department had infiltrated a local KKK klavern but was exposed.

He said the undercover officer found no evidence against any Klan member in connection with the violence.

The names of many of those who suffered violence were published last year in a mimeographed "rat sheet" put out and signed by a Klan organization with a Houston post office box.

The "rat sheet" listed names of persons the Klan found objectionable, along with their car license plates, home address and telephone numbers. The leaflet urged members to call up persons listed on the sheet at all hours of the day and night.

Frank Converse, grand dragon of the United Klans of America here and owner of a gun store, said the "rat sheet" is no longer published. Converse said his group was not responsible for the violence. Any member found violating the law, he said, will be expelled.